With reſpect to that anxiety to preſerve a reputation hardly earned, which leads ſagacious people to analyze it, I ſhall not make the obvious comment; but I am afraid that morality is very inſidiouſly undermined, in the female world, by the attention being turned to the ſhew inſtead of the ſubſtance. A ſimple thing is thus made ſtrangely complicated; nay, ſometimes virtue and its ſhadow are ſet at variance. We ſhould never, perhaps, have heard of Lucretia, had ſhe died to preſerve her chaſtity inſtead of her reputation. If we really deſerve our own good opinion we ſhall commonly be reſpected in the world; but if we pant after higher improvement and higher attainments, it is not ſufficient to view ourſelves as we ſuppoſe that we are viewed by others, though this has been ingeniouſly argued, as the foundation of our moral ſentiments *. Becauſe each by-ſtander may have his own prejudices, beſide the prejudices of his age or country. We ſhould rather endeavour to view ourſelves as we ſuppoſe that Being views us who ſeeth each thought ripen into action, and whoſe judgment never

* Smith.

ſwerves from the eternal rule of right. Righteous are all his judgments—juſt as merciful!

The humble mind that ſeeketh to find favour in His ſight, and calmly examines its conduct when only His preſence is felt, will ſeldom form a very erroneous opinion of its own virtues. During the ſtill hour of ſelf-collection the angry brow of offended juſtice will be fearfully deprecated, or the tie which draws man to the Deity will be recognized in the pure ſentiment of reverential adoration, that ſwells the heart without exciting any tumultuous emotions. In theſe ſolemn moments man diſcovers the germ of thoſe vices, which like the Java tree ſhed a peſtiferous vapour around—death is in the ſhade! and he perceives them without abhorrence, becauſe he feels himſelf drawn by ſome cord of love to all his fellow-creatures, for whoſe follies he is anxious to find every extenuation in their nature—in himſelf. If I, he may thus argue, who exerciſe my own mind, and have been refined by tribulation, find the ſerpent's egg in ſome fold of my heart, and cruſh it with difficulty, ſhall not I pity thoſe whoſe have ſtamped with leſs vigour, or who have heedleſsly nurtured the inſidious reptile till it poiſoned the vital ſtream it ſucked? Can I,